
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NUMBER SIXTY-NINE (2008)

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Importance of the Initiative

Over the past decade, the Commonwealth has lost over 60,000 acres per year, or approximately 165 acres a day, to development. Virginia's population is projected to grow over 23% in between now and 2030, which has the potential to accelerate development even further. The rapid pace of land consumption in Virginia demands that we address environmental and economic sustainability for ourselves and for future generations.

In addition to the loss of open space and other environmental impacts, sprawling development increases traffic congestion, lengthens commutes, discourages walking and biking, and diminishes our quality of life. Since land use patterns affect our transportation network, our solutions must strive to link planning efforts in transportation and land use more closely together. Striving for sustainable development is a crucial endeavor, and working toward this goal will demand that while providing for the present, we are also preserving resources for the needs of the future.

Through the smart use of investment and conservation, the Commonwealth must encourage a long-term approach to development in Virginia. To achieve this goal, various state agencies must better coordinate their work and find ways to provide incentives and technical assistance to localities. To fully realize the objective of sustainable development, members of the Cabinet must work with each other and within their respective departments to make it a priority. They must ensure that agency investments are directed to areas with existing infrastructure, encourage compact and mixed-use development, create diverse housing opportunities, and promote innovation.

By the power vested in me by Article V of the Constitution of Virginia, and Section 2.2-103 of the Code of Virginia, and subject always to my continuing and ultimate authority and

responsibility to act in such matters, I hereby establish a Sub-Cabinet on Community Investment and direct the Governor's Secretaries and all executive branch agencies and institutions to work with the Sub-Cabinet on Community Investment to make investment decisions.

Sub-Cabinet on Community Investment

There is hereby established the Sub-Cabinet on Community Investment to provide advice to the Commonwealth on the use of existing state discretionary funds to ensure that investment decisions promote economically and environmentally sustainable communities.

The Governor's Sub-Cabinet on Community Investment shall be chaired by the Secretary of Natural Resources. The Sub-Cabinet shall meet monthly and consist of the Secretaries of Natural Resources, Administration, Commerce and Trade, Finance, and Transportation. The Sub-Cabinet's responsibilities shall include the following:

1. Promote the Governor's Principles of Sustainable Community Investment.
2. Ensure that state investments are directed to projects that are consistent with the principles and recommend new criteria for discretionary spending programs that affect development patterns.
3. Collaborate on initiatives to continue to better link land use with transportation and to conserve open space.

Principles of Sustainable Community Investment

Sustainable development requires there to be economic growth in communities where economic needs are not being met. By properly maintaining and making more efficient use of existing infrastructure we can save money and conserve resources. The Commonwealth should be investing in projects that promote compact development, consume less land, conserve open space, and minimize the negative social, economic, and environmental consequences of dispersed land development patterns. Virginia's diverse waters, landscapes and other natural resources are key to the Commonwealth's economic prosperity, identity and the quality of life of its citizens. However, if used appropriately and sparingly, Virginia's abundant natural resources can provide the foundation for a sustained healthy economy.

Investment decisions should be based on the following basic principles:

1. Invest in innovation.
 - Inspire human ingenuity and financial capital and deploy it to ensure that communities' development desires are met in ways that are fiscally prudent and promote economic goals and citizens' quality of life.
 - Strengthen natural resource-based businesses, such as energy production, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, recreation and tourism, that are pioneers in the use of sustainable practices.
 - Assist emerging research and industries in their burgeoning early stages, and encourage efforts of existing industries to become more sustainable.

2. Invest in existing infrastructure.
 - Encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of existing infrastructure, giving preference to preservation and reuse of historic structures, rehabilitation of existing housing and schools, and redevelopment of brownfields.
 - Focus efforts to increase job opportunities on companies that are located near existing or planned water and sewer infrastructure, housing, existing workforce and transportation access.
3. Invest in compact development.
 - Create walkable, mixed-use districts within communities.
 - Ensure that the Commonwealth's decisions regarding the placement of infrastructure and state facilities and buildings encourages compact development and contributes to revitalization of urban centers.
4. Invest in the protection and restoration of Virginia's natural resources.
 - Protect and restore ecologically sensitive lands, wildlife habitat, recreational and cultural resources, and the working landscapes upon which our agriculture and forestry depend.
 - Improve water quality of Virginia's rivers, streams and the Chesapeake Bay.
 - Improve air quality in our urban and industrial areas and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all sources throughout the Commonwealth.
5. Conserve our limited natural resources.
 - Eliminate waste of water, energy and materials.
 - Plan and construct buildings and infrastructure to use land, energy, water, and materials efficiently.
 - Increase the supply of renewable sources of energy.
6. Invest in diverse housing opportunities.
 - Coordinate the provision of housing with the location of jobs, transportation options, and public services.
 - Encourage development of energy-efficient housing and expand the use of innovative building materials.
7. Invest in transportation choices.
 - Make alternatives to automobile travel – such as rail, transit, teleworking, walking, and bicycling – available and attractive, and provide intermodal connections.
8. Take a long-term view.
 - Look beyond immediate short-term capital costs so as to take account of future operational, maintenance, and other value savings.

It is important to assess development decisions in light of economic, social, and environmental productivity and sustainability. In applying these principles, the Commonwealth must ensure that fair consideration is given to rural projects that may have less existing

infrastructure, workforce and jobs than urban and suburban areas, but that offer sustainable development benefits to a defined rural community. The Commonwealth should promote equitable sharing of the benefits and burdens of development.

Applying the Principles

Agencies of the Commonwealth shall make decisions about the use of discretionary funds consistent with the principles of sustainable community development established in this Executive Order, and shall make quarterly reports to the Governor of how their use of such funds have aligned with the principles.

The Department of Planning and Budget shall establish a list of agencies and discretionary funds that shall be subject to the reporting requirement.

Agencies' initial reports shall include a review of the criteria used to evaluate grant applications to determine the extent which the criteria support the Principles of Sustainable Community Investment identified in this Executive Order. Based on this review, the agency shall either (1) revise the grant criteria to better reflect the Principles of Sustainable Community Investment or (2) provide a detailed explanation of why such a revision is not feasible, including state or federal statutory constraints. By October 1, 2008, agencies shall provide a report on their review of their grant criteria to the Department of Planning and Budget and to the Sub-Cabinet on Community Investment.

Thereafter, agencies shall submit quarterly, beginning January 1, 2009, a report on how the grants awarded actually advance the Principles of Sustainable Community Investment to the Department of Planning and Budget and to the Sub-Cabinet on Community Investment.

This Executive Order shall become effective upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect until June 30, 2011, unless amended or rescinded by further executive order.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia this 11th day of June, 2008.

Timothy M. Kaine, Governor

Attest:

Secretary of the Commonwealth